Just As I Am?

> **There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.**
> **Romans 8:1 (KJV)**

Does Christ accept me "Just as I am"? I have read the writings of some who call themselves "gay Christians" claiming that Christ accepts them as they are, but this is a phrase that many use to justify continued wallowing in the muck of all sorts of sin and I believe worthy of study. So I would like to talk for a moment about these four powerful words and how we are to properly understand and apply them, even to the very depths of our souls.

Christ must accept us just as we are for one simple reason: There is no way that we could ever become worthy of the gift of salvation. So yes, He accepts us just as we are, but that is not to say He wants us to stay that way.

> **Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.**
> **Matthew 7:13-14 (KJV)**

"Just as I am" is such a potentially deceptive excuse, for the fact of the matter is that at the very moment we sincerely chose to follow Christ we were changed; in an instant we went from "Just as I am" to "Just as I was"! Throughout the New Testament our relationship with Christ is likened to a walk, a journey that we make.

The real heart of the matter here is have we allowed Christ to change us? Or are we living just as sinful a life as before we supposedly repented? I say 'supposedly' because when we genuinely repent we not only feel remorse for our sins but begin to change and turn from them. If we are walking with Christ we are constantly changing, He is constantly dealing with sin in our lives. I am not the man I was ten, five, one year ago or even a month ago!

> **Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.**
> **2 Corinthians 5:17 (KJV)**

Spiritually speaking, are you the same person you once were? Are there victories over sin in your past? Christ still accepts me just as I am, however I am not the man that I was, but a new creature. We are required to walk with Christ, and the fruit of this walk is evident to all those around us and ourselves. We may go through periods where we backslide for a time, but we must get back on track.

> **For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.**
> **1 Corinthians 11:31 (KJV)**

Only you can answer this question for yourself, because only you know if you are really walking with Christ. We are required to examine ourselves constantly. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the deepest thoughts of your heart to you. We must maintain our garments. Are you struggling with sin? Good! As we grow in Christ we realize all the more the keen disappointment that our sin nature continues to hinder us.

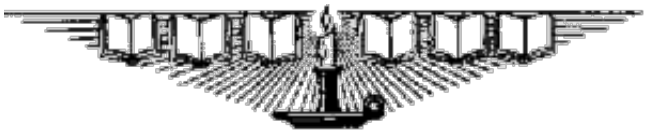
I remember having friends in AA tell me how it was a running gag that everyone attending these meetings was constantly sucking down caffeine, sugar and cigarettes. It's because we as humans tend to trade one addiction for another. As Christ works on us it is similar to peeling the layers of an onion; and the deeper we go the more base our sins become, we realize that surface issues that may have expressed themselves as addictions were merely the symptoms and are intrinsically tied to more deeply rooted sins like selfishness, laziness, fear or lacking self control.

> **But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.**
> **2 Corinthians 3:18 (KJV)**

We are all individuals and God does not deal with any two people in the same way. He holds the key to each of us and our unique personalities and problems. He stands ready to help us in every way, but we must submit to Him. He cannot help us until we are willing to put down everything simply because He will never violate our free will.

> **Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.**
> **Matthew 7:19-20 (KJV)**

When you look in the mirror what do you see? Do you see yourself conforming to the image of Christ? Are you conforming to God's Laws written in your heart and in His Word or do you find yourself twisting them to condone your sin? What are the fruits of your salvation? Only you can answer these questions for yourself and we will all be held accountable to God for the answer.

> **When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.**
> **Mark 2:17 (KJV)**

The message of Christ is only for those who realize they need to change. If we are not willing to change He cannot help us. So if you want to call yourself a "gay Christian" and bring your abomination along with you He cannot help you. But if you sincerely want to change and are willing to struggle with such sin Christ has the power to set you free! That's not to say we cleanse ourselves, but that we must be willing to be cleansed by Him. Christ will accept you right now "Just as you are" if you are willing to allow Him to change you.